Hello federal intranet folks,

At last week's Government Web and New Media conference, the FICM held an unconference session. It was a very good discussion, and we picked up 40 new members for the listserve! Thanks to everyone for your interest and your enthusiasm.

The session consisted of two discussions:
1. FedSpace, the Federal-wide intranet under development, with leadership from GSA, and
2. getting the FICM back to being a vibrant and active part of the government Web community.

1. FedSpace

To start off the session, Emma Antunes and Tiffany Smith (both on detail to GSA) gave us an overview of FedSpace, an intranet meant for the entire Federal government that would include community tools, file sharing, and widgets that Federal employees could take advantage of both for their agencies and for working with others.

They also hosted q&a about FedSpace's intentions, features, and more, some of which I have attempted to summarize* below (we covered a lot of ground:-)

- FedSpace is not meant to replace agency intranets.
- It will include file sharing, wiki tools, etc., just for use by government and its contractors.
- It is required to have areas designated specifically for each agency involved.
- It will have moderated topic areas where users can collaborate across government.
- It will link to resources like WebContent.gov.
- It was suggested that existing military web tools could be integrated.
- It was suggested that copies of policies be made available on FedSpace.
- It was suggested that it include a consolidated response area, where people can access requests for action or info in one place.
- It will include document management tools.
- OMB's MAX wiki site will be part of FedSpace; it will remain a more advanced wiki tool, while FedSpace will also employ a simpler wiki tool.
- Incentive for agencies to get involved in this was posed as an issue that needs to be addressed.
- Notification system based on roles and responsibilities was discussed.
- It will have widgets that can be brought into agency sites.
- Points of contact will probably be identified for each bureau, which will, among other things, help similar bureaus work together more easily.
- A secure, gov't version of YouTube is on the to-do list (508 issues are a challenge).
- If someone leaves their job/the government, their profile will expire or be disabled.
- Internal access to an agency's network will not be available to those outside that agency.
- Concerns about sharing info across agencies from a security perspective are still being figured out.
- How much this can/will integrate with existing agency intranets is still being discussed.
- They are working with OPM and GSA to identify who from each agency would be tabbed for rollout; they are considering the human resources and specific institutional lines of business for each agency.

*Keep in mind that the FedSpace team has a lot of work to do, and many of the features and tools mentioned are under development — in other words, don't hold this e-mail against them in a "But Dave's e-mail said you would have such-and-such feature!" fashion. If it doesn't add up, it's probably my fault.

They hope to get some documentation about FedSpace out soon, and there will be a place to share ideas and discuss this online. Stay tuned!

2. Getting the FICM back on track
We followed the FedSpace discussion by talking about jump-starting the FICM after this "quiet" period we've had.

First, we asked people what they thought a good frequency for meetings would be; the consensus was that:
- the steering committee should meet monthly (via phone conference/web conference)
- the entire group should meet every other month (via phone conference/web conference)
- the entire group should meet in person quarterly (or every other every other month:-)

If you have a different opinion on the schedule, please reply to me alone with your ideas.

We then asked for topics of interest to discuss at future meetings:
- content management and publishing software
- how to get people to use the intranet
- content creation and maintenance
- information architecture
- collaborative tools and records management (not sure if those were meant to go together)

Please send other ideas to the whole listserve; I know I missed at least one.

Thank you, everyone. We're looking forward to a fresh start!

—Dave Hebert (on behalf of the FICM Steering Committee)